Health Care for Pregnant Inmates

705.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish prenatal and postpartum health care services for inmates who are pregnant. Services may include assistance recovering from the effects of potentially unhealthy lifestyles, which could include tobacco use, alcohol and drug abuse or addiction, and a lack of previous adequate medical care. Because of unhealthy lifestyle choices prior to incarceration, many inmate pregnancies are classified as high risk. This policy is intended to protect the health of the pregnant inmate and her fetus.

705.2 POLICY

It is the policy of this office that a qualified health care professional should provide comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care for all pregnant inmates during their incarceration.

A qualified health care professional shall provide counseling and information to pregnant inmates regarding planning for their unborn child.

705.3 BOOKING - PREGNANCY SCREENING

When booking a female inmate, the following steps shall be taken:

(a) All females shall be asked if they are pregnant. If the inmate states she is pregnant, a confirming urine test should be performed within 48 hours and documented in the medical record.

(b) Pregnant inmates who are under the influence of or withdrawing from alcohol or other substances should be referred to a nurse, if available, or other available resources.

705.4 HOUSING

Inmates who are known to be pregnant may be housed in any unit appropriate for their classification, with the following exceptions:

(a) All pregnant inmates identified at intake or the obstetric clinic to be high-risk or who are in their last trimester of pregnancy shall be housed in a lower bunk location.

(b) Medical staff should be consulted prior to housing assignment.

705.5 COUNSELING AND TREATMENT

The Office will provide all necessary counseling and treatment to pregnant inmates to ensure they are receiving the proper care. To accomplish this, the following shall occur:

(a) The directions of the obstetric specialist shall be followed throughout the pregnancy and postnatal period. No non-medical staff has the unilateral authority to change or overrule an order or care recommendation made by the contract medical provider The Chief Deputy of Corrections or designee and contract medical provider shall develop a process by which perceived conflicts between medical orders/recommendations and

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safety and security interests of the correctional facility can be discussed and resolved. Ultimately, the correctional facility must provide adequate treatment for an inmate's medical needs.

(b) Upon request of the inmate, reasonable efforts should be made to provide midwifery or doula services to inmates who are pregnant or who have given birth within the last six weeks (RCW 70.48.135).

705.6 RESTRAINTS

Inmates who are known to be pregnant or who are in labor shall not be placed in restraints except as provided in the Use of Restraints Policy.

705.6.1 NOTICE REGARDING RESTRAINTS

The Chief Deputy of Corrections or the authorized designee should ensure notices are posted regarding the use of restraints on inmates who are pregnant, in labor, or in postpartum recovery in locations where medical care is provided within the facility and provide notice of the requirements to appropriate staff. Appropriate staff includes all medical staff, staff who are involved in the transportation of pregnant inmates, and other staff designated by the Chief Deputy of Corrections (RCW 70.48.501).

705.7 ABORTIONS

Inmates who wish to terminate their pregnancy shall be referred to outside counseling services for further information regarding available options. The Office shall not impede the woman's access to abortion counseling or services and shall provide necessary transportation and supervision to such services. Any financial obligations will be the responsibility of the inmate. These rights will be posted in all areas that house female inmates.

705.8 PRESENCE DURING LABOR AND DELIVERY

Members are not permitted in the room during labor or childbirth unless requested by medical personnel. Should medical personnel request the presence of a member of the facility, a female member should respond, if practicable (RCW 70.48.500(4)).

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